Secretive Soros-funded group works behind the scenes with Biden admin on policy, documents show

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In this article:
George Soros Business magnate
Michael Klarman American historian

A secretive group backed by millions of dollars from liberal billionaire George Soros is working behind the scenes with President Biden's administration to shape policy, documents reviewed by Fox News show.

Governing for Impact (GFI), the veiled group, boasts in internal memos of implementing more than 20 of its regulatory agenda items as it works to reverse Trump-era deregulations by zeroing in on education, environmental, health care, housing and labor issues.

"Open Society is proud to support Governing for Impact's efforts to protect American workers, consumers, patients, students and the environment through policy reform," Tom Perriello, executive director of Soros' Open Society Foundations, told Fox News Digital.

Hungarian-born U.S. investor and philanthropist George Soros has been bankrolling liberal causes across the globe for years. Fabrice Coffrini/AFP

LIBERAL DARK MONEY JUGGERNAUT RAISES $1.6 BILLION TO FLOOD LEFT-WING GROUPS WITH CASH, TAX FORMS REVEAL

"Their work gives voice to people often overlooked in a regulatory environment too often dominated by corporate interests," he continued. "Our support for Governing for Impact's work is publicly available on our website and we are transparent about our enthusiasm for their victories for American workers and families."

GFI, however, works to remain secretive. It is invisible to internet search engines like Google (an unrelated "Govern for Impact" is the only group that appears in a search). No news reports or press releases appear on its existence outside of a mention of its related action fund in a previous Fox News article on the $1.6 billion Arabella Advisors-managed dark money network, to which it is attached.

But as the group attempted to conceal its operations, it sought talent on Harvard Law School's website, which was discoverable. The posting, which no longer appears on the site, was for legal policy internships.

The Harvard advert said the group was established to prepare the Biden administration for a "transformative governance" and that it had produced "more than 60 in-depth, shovel-ready regulatory recommendations" for dozens of federal agencies.

The listing also contained an email address ending in "@governingforimpact.org," which is the group's website that can only be accessed by those who know the URL.

According to its website, Rachael Klarman, a Harvard Law School grad, steers the group. Her father, Michael Klarman, is a professor at Harvard Law and also has ties to progressive advocacy groups. He is an advisory board member of the left-wing dark money judicial group Take Back the Court. Last year, Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, D-RI, invited him to testify before Congress on dark money's "assault" on the judiciary system.

"Governing for Impact is the perfect example of the Left's fake outrage over 'dark money' in politics," said the Capital Research Center's Parker Thayer, who discovered the group and alerted Fox News.

"As a 'fiscally sponsored' dark money project that writes and pushes regulations from the shadows, hidden from the public and funded by one billionaire foundation, GFI embodies everything the Left pretends to abhor."

"Governing for Impact conducts and shares research designed to help ensure that the federal government works more effectively for everyday working Americans, not just for members of industry groups that have long devoted vast resources to pursuing their own policy agendas," Rachael Klarman told Fox News.

"We were founded in 2019 and have developed detailed regulatory recommendations for multiple federal agencies, which are published on our website," she said.

BIDEN HHS SET TO ROLL BACK HEALTH CARE CONSCIENCE PROTECTIONS

GFI's site contains dozens of legal strategy memos for shaping executive orders and regulations in the educational, environmental, health care, housing and labor realms.

The memos generally do not identify their authors. Some show partnerships with outside groups such as The National Student League Defense Network, the Center for Law, Energy and the Environment at Berkeley Law School and the Economic Policy Institute.

"Many of the proposals on this site focus on how the new administration could unwind the previous administration's harmful regulatory legacy, but GFI continues to take on new policy projects at all levels of government," the site states.

The Education Department is set to announce a new regulation that will change Title IX rules on anti-transgender bias in schools, reversing Trump-era guidance. GFI appears to have worked on the issue, as its site contains a November 2020 legal memo on the matter.

BIDEN EXPECTED TO ROLL BACK TRUMP ADMINISTRATION TITLE IX CHANGES; FALSELY ACCUSED STUDENT'S FATHER SPEAKS OUT

GFI also created an internal slide deck and uploaded it to Prezi's presentation site. The slide, which is now inaccessible, says GFI has implemented more than 20 of its federal proposals as of 2021.

Multiple federal officials appear in the internal slide as a part of its "listening tour," including Sharon Block, Biden's former top regulation review chief. Block served as administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA), a division of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), from the start of Biden's presidency until February of this year.

"Under Sharon's leadership, OIRA has played a crucial role in advancing the president's agenda — from powering our historic economic recovery and combating the pandemic, to tackling the climate crisis and advancing equity," Shalanda Young, director of the OMB, said before her departure.

GFI showcases Block's exhilaration over a GFI proposal in the slide. "I'm jumping out of my seat with excitement about this idea," Block says in its "feedback" section.

Block, now a professor of practice at Harvard Law School, did not respond to a Fox News Digital inquiry into what proposals she had worked on with the group while acting as the top regulator in the Biden administration.

In addition to Block, GFI highlights other top federal officials as part of its "listening tour." Senior DOJ official Joel McElvain, who in 2018 left his post in protest of the Trump administration's stance on the Affordable Care Act, but returned in 2021, appears in the slide.

It also shows Raj Nayak, assistant secretary at the Labor Department, Sabeel Rahman, senior counselor of OIRA, Narayan Subramanian, an Energy Department legal advisor, and Maggie Thomas, who Biden picked as chief of staff in the Office of Domestic Climate Policy.

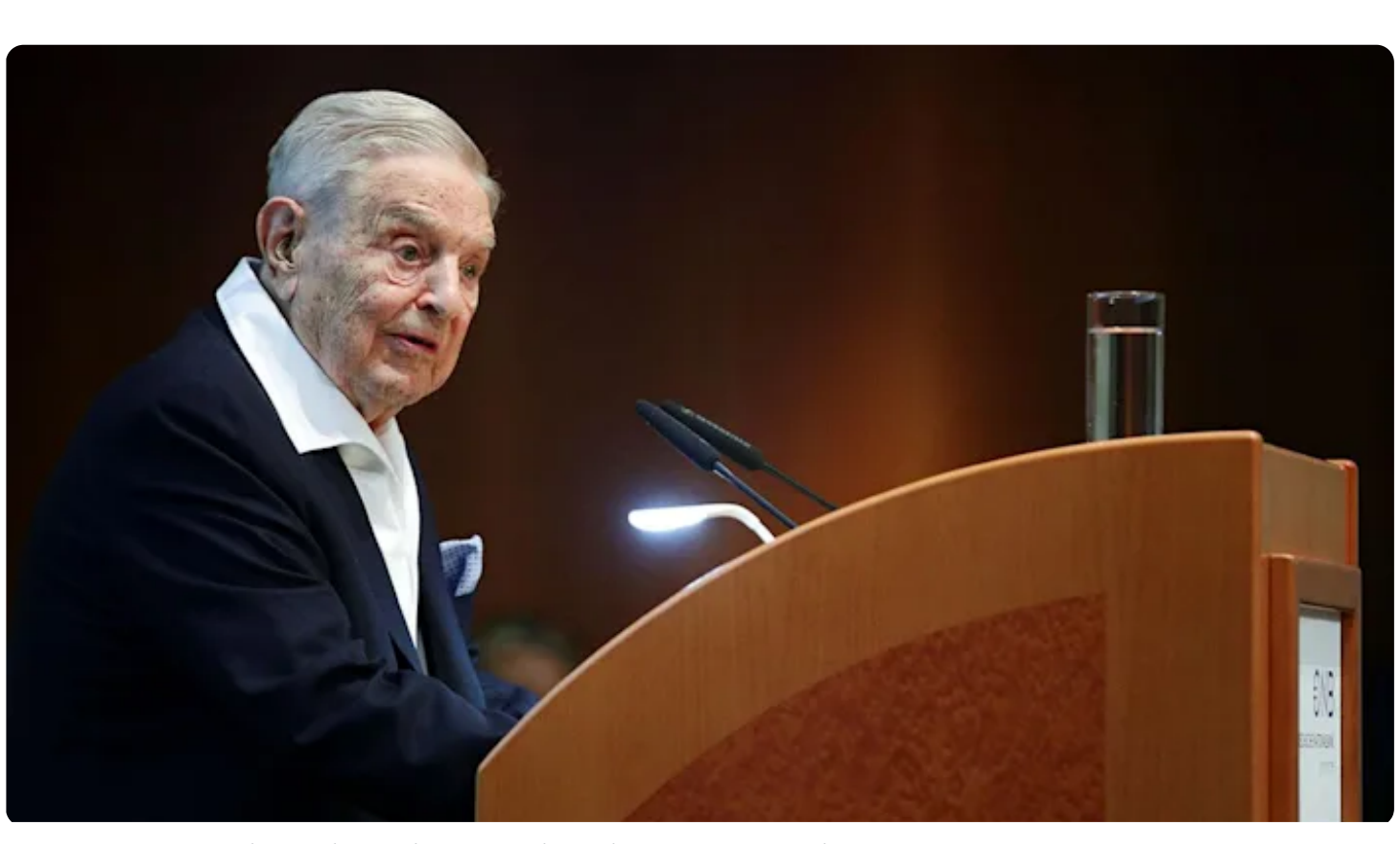
GFI has prepared legal policy memos for at least ten federal departments and agencies, the slide shows. They also produced ten administrative law primers as of 2021.

GFI, meanwhile, is not a stand-alone nonprofit. Instead, the New Venture Fund, a nonprofit incubator managed by the D.C.-based consulting firm Arabella Advisors, fiscally sponsors it. This setup allows GFI to avoid filing tax forms with the IRS.

The group's attachment to the Arabella-Advisors dark money network, which raised $1.6 billion in anonymous donations in 2020, is not discoverable from public records. The New Venture Fund does not report GFI as a trade name in its D.C. business filings.

However, GFI's links to the New Venture Fund are discoverable in George Soros' Open Society Foundations (OSF) grant database. A search of the database shows that Soros nonprofits sent $12.98 million to GFI and its related action fund in 2019 and 2020.

The Foundation to Promote Open Society awarded $5.53 million to GFI. Meanwhile, the Open Society Policy Center sent $7.45 million to GFI's action fund. The Sixteen Thirty Fund, also managed by Arabella Advisors, fiscally sponsors the action fund.


George Soros speaks to the audience at the Schumpeter Award in Vienna, Austria, June 21, 2019. Reuters/Lisi Niesner/File Photo

SOROS BANKROLLS DARK MONEY HUB FOR ACTIVISTS PUSHING TO DISMANTLE POLICE, GRANTS SHOW

"As a fiscal sponsor, New Venture Fund provides operational and administrative support to help advocates and philanthropists quickly and efficiently launch new solutions to today's toughest challenges," the group told Fox News. "New Venture Fund explicitly does not engage in partisan activities or support any electoral campaigns, and we comply with all relevant disclosure laws and requirements."

Like the New Venture Fund, the Sixteen Thirty Fund has not reported it as a trade name in D.C. business records.

"Sixteen Thirty Fund supports progressive causes and campaigns fighting for economic equity, affordable health care, climate solutions, racial justice, voter access, and other essential social-change goals," the group told Fox News. "We follow all local, state, and federal law with respect to the disclosure of individual donors and grantees."

GFI sports additional links to Soros' network. Perriello, OSF's executive director, sits on GFI's four-person board. MB Maxwell, a special advisor at OSF, appeared in GFI's slide deck as part of its "listening tour."

The White House did not respond to Fox News Digital's request for comment.

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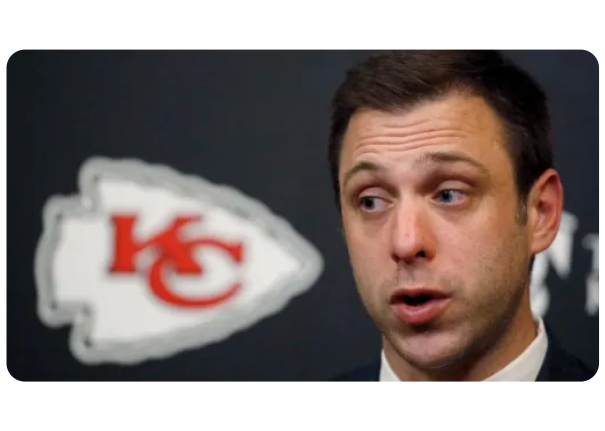
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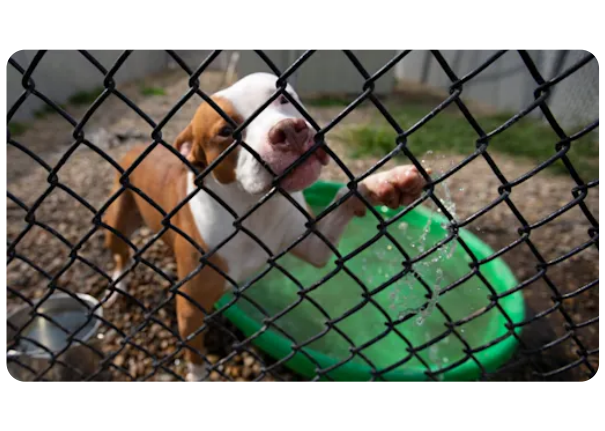
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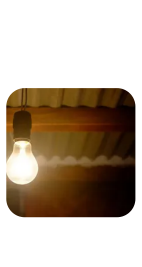
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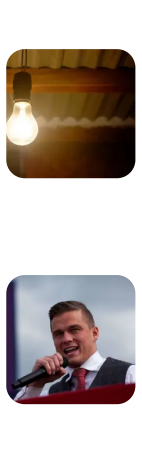
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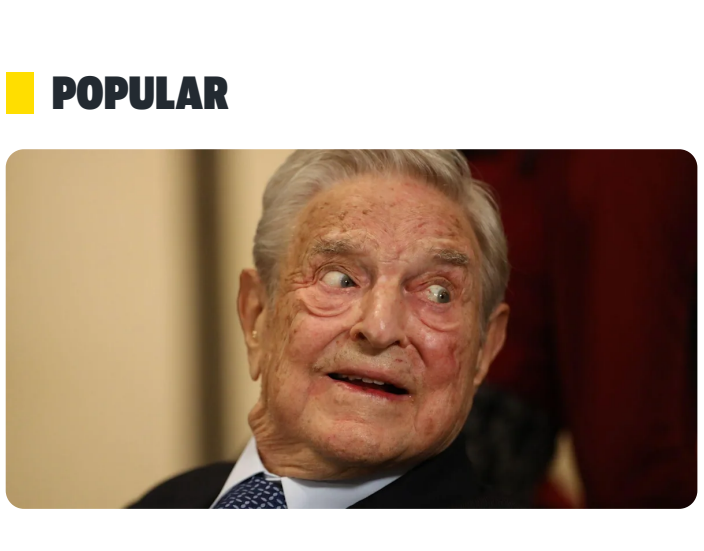
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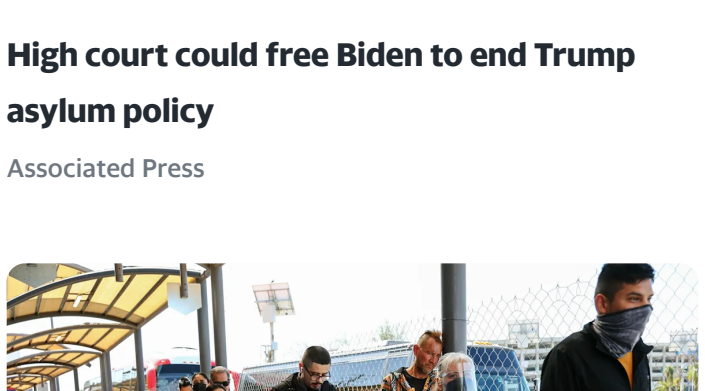
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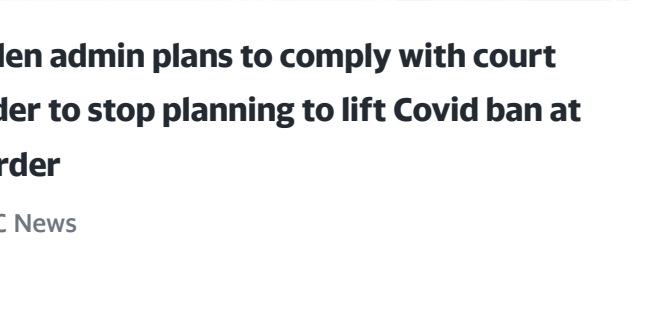
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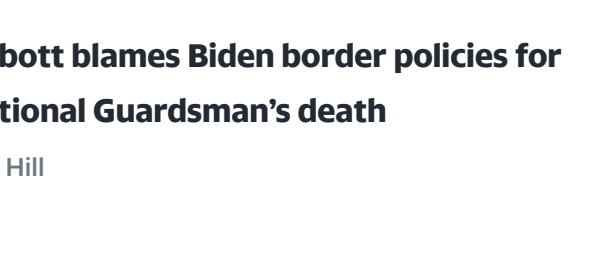
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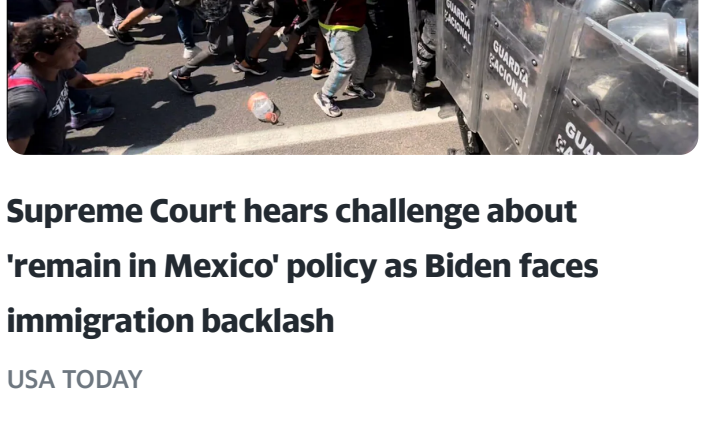
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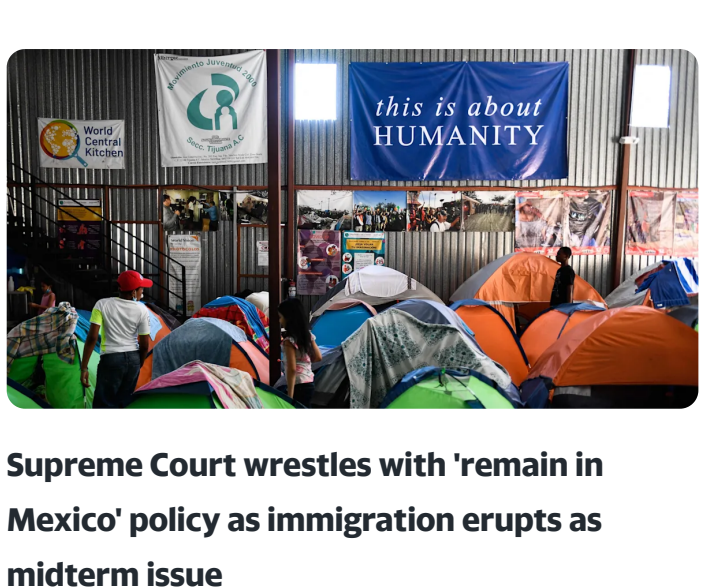
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